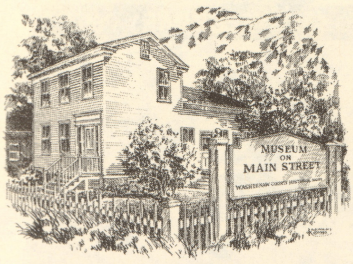
FEBRUARY 2007



IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • FOUNDED 1857

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INFORMATION
Published Seven Times A Year From September-May.

Museum On Main Street
500 N. Main Street at Beakes Street
Post Office Box 3336
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3336

Phone: 734.662.9092
Email: wchs-500@ameritech.net
Web Site: www.washtenawhistory.org

Annual dues: January-December individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

RICHARD L. GALANT, PhD

President's Letter

The Washtenaw County Historical Society marks its 150th anniversary as an historical entity in 2007. The Society is planning to celebrate its anniversary through the year. Currently, Board Member, Sue Kosky, is busy serving as the chair to organize and plan celebratory events. Various committees are planning various events and activities that recognize WCHS' memorable achievements over the last one hundred fifty years. If you would like to become involved in planning or stage this celebration, contact WCHS at 734.662.9092 or wchs-500@ameritech.net.

As the days in 2007 pass, many events, exhibitions, and scholarly activities will be available to interest WCHS members and the rest of the community. We welcome each one of you to become a participant in the celebration of the sesquicentennial of one of the earliest historical societies in Michigan, Washtenaw County Historical Society.

Sue Kosky is also in charge of the WCHS Museum Shop. She has selected many fine books about Washtenaw County history for the shop along with many other historical memorabilia. A new book that Sue has added to the shop's inventory is by Carol Gibson and Lola M. Jones (daughter and mother) in the Black America Series entitled, **Another Ann Arbor**. This book is dedicated to Dr. Lee W. Jones, DDS, father and husband of Carol and Lola; and it shares the rich history Black Americans have contributed to our county. Also, it may serve as an excellent gift idea in February during Black History month.

Future Exhibitions

February 10 to May 30
(ending date tentative)
One Room Schoolhouses of Washtenaw County

Summer 2007
Special Sesquicentennial Exhibition
featuring artifacts from our collection at the Museum on Main Street. Dates to be announced.

October 17, 2007 – January 9, 2008
Winter Holiday

Newsletter Corrections

Corrections to November 2006 newsletter:

Page 2—The early German settler pictured is Jonathon Henry Mann. Emanuel was his son.

Page 3—The lower right picture is Wagner's second blacksmith shop on Ashley Street, later rented to blacksmith and band leader, Henry Otto.

Page 4—Top picture: Ann Arbor Bottling Works, 122 East Washington Street, W. Fred Schlanderer, prop.

LOUISA PIEPER

Ann Arbor Early History

Map of Northwest Territory

On Sunday, November 19, 2006, Louisa Pieper shared her PowerPoint presentation with a crowd of guests of the Washtenaw County Historical Society at the Ypsilanti District Library on Whitaker Road

Michigan Territory

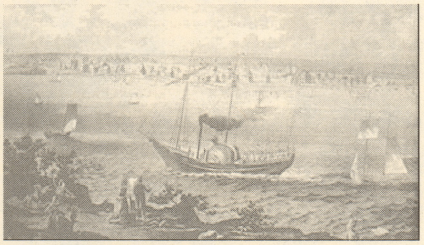
The Northwest Territory was established by congress in 1787 following the end of the war of independence from England. It extended westward from New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia to the Mississippi, and north from the Ohio River to the Great Lakes. The law decreed that, rather than being divided among the thirteen original states, this huge area was to become between three and five new states. Once a portion of the land had a large enough population of adult males (women and children did not count), it could qualify for territorial status and eventually statehood. Indiana Territory was formed in 1800 and in 1803 Ohio was the first to become a state.

The village of Detroit, settled early by the French in 1704, was still a small outpost in 1805 when Michigan became a territory and Judge Augustus Woodward arrived with the new territorial governor, William Hull. Their work building the new territory was hampered by a renewed war with Britain in 1812, during which Hull disgraced himself by surrendering the town to the enemy without a shot.

Judge Augustus Woodward

By 1817, with the country and the territory at peace, Woodward worked with Father Gabriel Richard and John Monteith to establish a formal education system for Michigan. Woodward called it the Catholipistemiad and classes began in a building on Bates Street This was the foundation of what became the University of Michigan.

Building on Bates Street, Detroit, where first classes were held



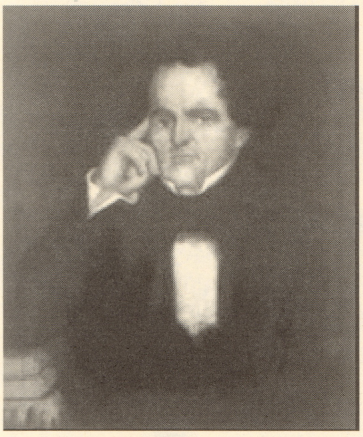
Steamship Walk-in-the-Water

Land access to Michigan from the south meant negotiating northern Ohio's Great Black Swamp. Water access meant braving Lake Erie's treacherous storms in a sailing ship. The launching of the Walk-in-the-Water, the first steamship on the lakes, heralded an era of greater ease and safety for settlers.

Lewis Cass, the young, new territorial governor, worked hard to promote settlement. By 1824, Indiana and Illinois had already acheived statehood but Michigan was only beginning. The opening of the Erie Canal in New York would soon change that.

The Village of Annarbour

When Virginia widower, John Allen, married his widowed distant cousin, Ann Barry McCue, each of them already had two children. John's son and daughter lived with his parents, while Ann's two sons lived with their guardian, her brother-in-law, William McCue. John and Ann appear to have been happy at first and Ann gave birth to a daughter within a year. Soon afterward John, seeking to discharge a crippling debt incurred by his father, left Virginia in slightly suspicious circumstances and headed north to seek his fortune. Friends in Buffalo, New York urged him to try Michigan where government land sold for $1.25 an acre.

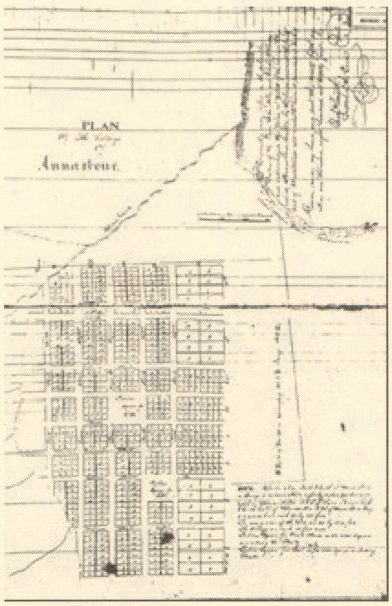


Left:
John Allen

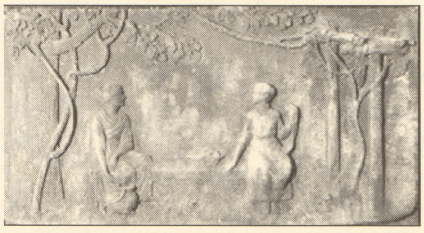
Right:
Ann Barry McCue Allen

Arriving in Detroit in early 1824, Allen met New Yorker Elisha Walker Rumsey. Like Allen, Rumsey was looking to make a fresh start and, with his second wife, Mary Ann, live down his own shady past. In February, they headed west looking for a place to found a new town. Passing through the settlement of Woodruff's Grove, where the city of Ypsilanti would later rise, they followed Indian trails upstream along the beautiful Huron River until they found the perfect site. Here a good stream would provide water power needed for saw and grist mills. A large, gently sloping hill beside the creek and the river was crowned by an oak opening. Large trees shaded out much of the underbrush so it would be easier to clear land for settlement. They hurried back to Detroit to register their claim with Governor Cass. Learning that Washtenaw County had just been formed in the area, they convinced Cass to make their village the county seat and agreed in return to build a bridge over the Huron and donate land for a courthouse and a jail. By May, John had surveyed the land and registered their platt as "The Village of Annarbour."

John's younger brother James Turner Allen traveled from Virginia to Ann Arbor, with John's parents, wife Ann, and their daughter, Sarah. The party arrived in October 1824. Though John's children by his first wife came too, Ann's two sons had to remain behind in Virginia with their guardian, always a source of pain for Ann. In 1881, after James had been living in Chicago for many years, he was asked why his brother chose such an unusual name for the town. He told a story about John asking the two Anns for suggestions as they sat sewing in an arbor of vines near the creek. Historian Russell Bidlack has pointed out, however, that this was impossible since Ann Allen did not arrive until long after the name had been selected. So the memorial plaque on West Huron Street, placed by the D.A.R. in honor of the centennial of the founding only commemorates a myth. Bidlack's theory is that the name is for Ann Allen only, not Mary Ann Rumsey. Arbor, the latin word for tree, is for the majestic oaks that gave the new town a park-like setting.



1824 plat map of the "Village of Annarbour"



Memorial plaque on West Huron Street

The new village grew rapidly and Allen grew rich with it, though Rumsey had the misfortune to die of a fever in 1827. His grave is in Forest Hill Cemetery. Among the many "Yankees" arriving from New England and New York was Daniel Brown who opened one of the first stores on Main Street. His brother, Anson, soon joined him and in 1830 bought up all the land on the north side of the bridge over the Huron River where the road came in from Pontiac and Detroit. With his partner, Edwin Fuller, he called his addition Lower Town. He built a dam, a millrace, a flour mill, and, in 1832, a large commercial block he called the Exchange – probably because there was very little hard cash around then and most transactions involved barterering goods. Today, this is the oldest documented building in Ann Arbor. Across the street, brickmaker and storekeeper, Josiah Beckley, built a similar building called the Huron Block.

Exchange, built in 1832 in Lower Town

Brown built his home on the bluff overlooking the river and the millrace. In 1895 Eli Moore, a later owner, moved the upright portion to the corner of Pontiac and Longshore. Brown's grandiose plans died with him in a cholera epidemic in 1834. His partners sold out and the upper village remained the center of town. Beckley's brother Guy, a Methodist minister, brought lasting fame to the neighborhood by publishing the nationally famous abolitionist journal *Signal of Liberty* in the Huron Block during the 1840s. His home at 1425 Pontiac Trail was a station on the Undergound Railroad.

Huron Block, built by Josiah Beckley in Lower Town

By 1833 the village was incorporated, with John Allen as president, and the first courthouse was completed.

Guy Beckley home, 1425 Pontiac Trail

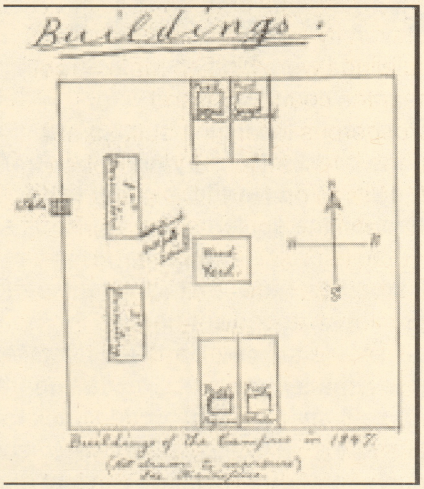
Though Michigan qualified for statehood by 1836, a boundary dispute with Ohio delayed ratification until January of 1837. The very young territorial governor, Stevens T. Mason became our first governor. A group of local real estate speculators called the Ann Arbor Land Company doubled the size of the town. When their bid to win the state capitol for their development failed, they succeeded in convincing the new Board of Regents to locate the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor instead by donating 40 acres for the campus.

First courthouse

The first buildings on campus were four identical houses for professors, completed in 1840. Only the President's House survives today, with many later additions. A large classroon/dormitory block opened in 1841, soon named Mason Hall in honor of the governor. Its twin, South College, was completed by 1849. Many years later, a student from the 1840s drew this map of the early campus as he remembered it.

1837 map of Ann Arbor

Mason Hall and South College



Student map of University of Michigan campus

A year later the Medical Department was established with an impressive new building on East University. Silas Douglass was one of its first professors, and Superintendant of Buildings. A founder of the gas company, he also served as Mayor. His home on Huron Street was beautifully rehabilitated by First Baptist Church.

Medical School, University of Michigan

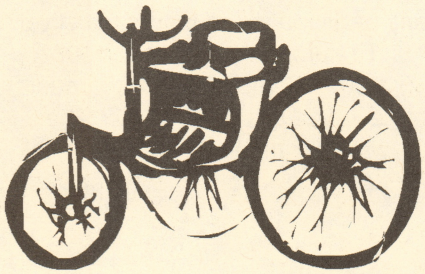
Main Street buildings near the courthouse

The village prospered as the University grew. Substantial buildings were built on Main Street near the courthouse and prosperous local men built homes in the latest styles: Judge Robert W. Wilson on North Division, Postmaster Henry DeWitt Bennett on South Division, and retired navy surgeon Benajah Ticknor out in the country on Packard Road.

By 1851 the village was incorporated as a city. The 1853 map, the first to show buildings, gives us a clear picture of how much Ann Arbor had grown in just 29 years.

1853 map of Ann Arbor

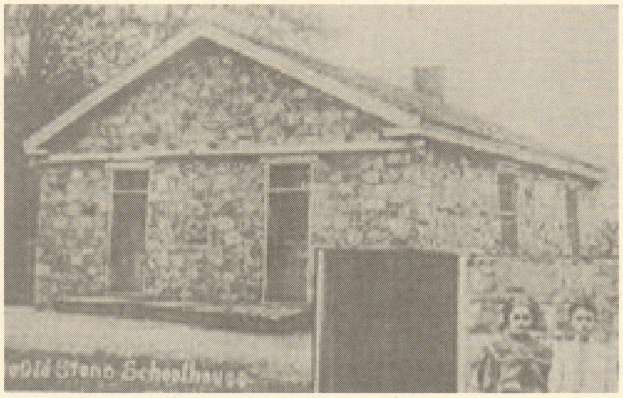
Photos:
Bentley Historical Library



COMING EXHIBIT
FEBRUARY 10 - MAY 30, 2007 ***(ENDING DATE IS TENTATIVE)***

One-Room School Houses of Washtenaw County

Our next exhibit will look at the one-room schoolhouses of Washtenaw County and the role they played in the community. The student and teacher experience will be displayed at the Museum on Main Street by looking at each school of record and using artifacts from our collection to round out the story. One-room schoolhouses educated the rural students to help them negotiate a changing world. Such noted people as Alan Shepard (astronaut), Laura Ingalls Wilder (author of Little House on the Prairie) and Joyce Carol Oates (novelist) all hail from the one-room school house experience.



Stone School House, destroyed 1911

One-room schools were commonplace throughout rural portions of the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In most rural and small town schools all students met in a single room. There, a single teacher taught "the three R's" (reading, writing and arithmetic) to seven or eight grade levels of elementary boys and girls.

The quality of facilities at one-room schools varied with local economic conditions but, generally, the number of children at each grade level would vary with local populations. Most buildings were of simple frame construction, some with the school bell on a cupola. In Midwestern areas, sod construction was also used as well as stone in areas where stone was available. In some locations, the schoolhouse was painted red, but most seem to have been white.

The blackboard really was a black board, made of wide boards painted black. It was not until much later that slate was used for chalkboards, although students often had individual slates for writing practice.
Teachers in one-room schools were often former students. Their role is well-described by a student from Kentucky in the 1940s: "The teachers that taught in the one-room, rural schools were very special people. During the winter months they would get to the school early to get a fire started in the potbelly stove, so the building would be warm for the students. On many occasions they would prepare a hot, noon meal on top of the stove, usually consisting of soup or stew of some kind. They took care of their students like a new mother hen would care for her newly hatched chicks—always looking out for their health and welfare."

The teacher's residence was often attached to the school, or very close by, so that a male teacher's wife and family were an integral part of the management and support system for the school. Single female

teachers were more often billeted or boarded with a local family to provide for social norms requiring social supervision of single females.

A typical school day was 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a morning and an afternoon recess of 15 minutes each and an hour period for lunch. The older students were given the responsibility of bringing in water and carrying in coal or wood for the stove. The younger students would be given responsibilities according to their size and gender such as cleaning the black board (chalkboard), taking the erasers outside for dusting plus other duties that they were capable of doing.

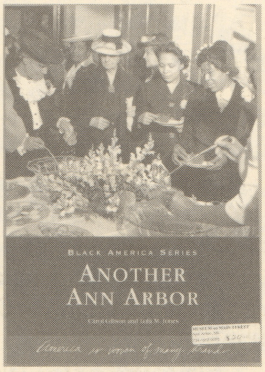
Transportation for children who lived too far to walk was often provided by horse-drawn kid-hack or sulky, which could only travel a limited distance in a reasonable amount of time each morning and evening, or students might ride a horse, these being put out to pasture in an adjoining paddock during the day. In later times, students rode bicycles.

The school house was the center and focus for thousands of rural communities, hamlets and small towns. Often, town meetings and picnics were also held there.

The vast majority of one-room schools in the United States are no longer used as schools and have either been torn down or converted to other purposes.

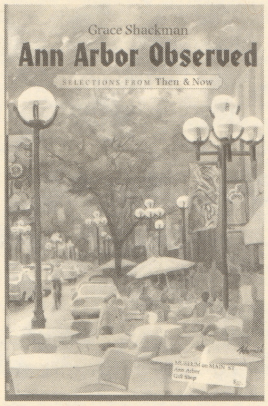
New Books in Our Museum Shop

When you come to the ***Museum on Main Street*** be sure to stop in the Museum Shop. We draw to your attention three new books written by local authors about local people.



Mother and daughter, Lola Jones and Carol Gibson have written a book for the Black America Series, **Another Ann Arbor**.

Richard and Ruth Adler have written a history of Jewish settlers and Jewish families in our area, **Jewish Ann Arbor**.



Grace Shackman has gathered together 44 articles she wrote for the *Ann Arbor Observer* over the years. **Ann Arbor Observed** is a 'must have' for Ann Arbor expatriates, UM alumni and visitors alike.

Our new volunteer webmaster, Jan Tripp, has been working on updating our website. Take a look at www.washtenawhistory.org and, especially, click on 'giftshop' and then 'books.' Our Museum Shop has a fine collection of publications pertaining to Washtenaw County. For additional information, please call 734 / 662-9092 or eMail wchs-500@ameritech.net

Sesquicentennial Plans

2007 will be the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Washtenaw County Historical Society. Plans are in the works to celebrate with year-long activities. Sue Kosky is chairing the festivities.

Reminder

Only five months left to complete your **Passport to History** and be eligible for a small prize or drawing.

Passport to History is a project sponsored by the Washtenaw County Historical Consortium, a group of representatives from historical organizations, institutions and agencies throughout Washtenaw County.

The passport is available at any participating location in the county. It is accompanied by a brochure listing the participating venues, such as Museum on Main Street, Kempf House, Cobblestone Farm, Hack House in Milan, Ypsilanti Historical Society Museum and many others.

When you visit a site, have the passport signed and dated. Visiting twelve sites makes you eligible for a small prize and visiting fifteen sites enters you in a drawing for one of three prizes worth $50 at any participating museum gift shop.

The project runs through June 30, 2007. Eligible passports must be received by July 6, 2007. The drawing will be held July 8, 2007 at Parker Mill during Huron River Day.

AROUND THE COUNTY

Upcoming Events

Saline Area Historical Society
Wednesday, February 21, 2007
7:30 p.m.
117 S. Ann Arbor Street
(former Methodist Church), Saline
Wystan Stevens will share his knowledge and slides of Ann Arbor cemeteries.

Salem Area Historical Society
"RAISE the BARN"
Dinner and Auction
Saturday, February 17th
6:00 PM
Fox Hills Club House. Cost: $25.00 per person (pre-paid). *Includes: Multi-Course Buffet Dinner and Live Auction.*

Auction items will include tickets to area attractions, sports memorabilia, historical items and restaurant gift certificates. All Proceeds will be used to **"RAISE the BARN."**

Salem Area Historical Society is RESTORING Washtenaw's Oldest Barn (1830s) on its site at North Territorial and Curtis Roads.

Contact Cindy Brautigan (734-454-3495) to donate items for Auction. Reservations:
salem_area_hs@yahoo.com Jean: 248-349-2687 or Don: 248-349-3550

Cobblestone Farm Association
Friday, February 23, 2007
5:30 – 8 p.m.
2781 Packard Rd., Ann Arbor
Winter Evening: A Musical Interlude will feature Tom Twiss of Milford Music. He will discuss the instrument, the music and the period in general of the transition period of the 19th century.

Admission: $3.00/ adult, $9.00/ family, children under three and current members free.
For information call 734-994-2928

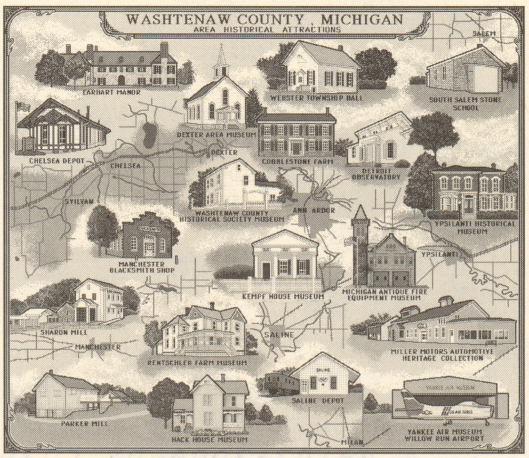
Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County
Sunday, February 25, 2007 • 1:30 p.m.
St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium
Xavier Allen, local historical re-enactor and storyteller, will lecture on "The War of 1812-A Perspective from Upper Canada" followed by a class "War of 1812 History and Ancestors" by Carolyn Griffin and a panel of members.

2007 WCHS Sesquicentennial events.
Dates to be announced
Dedication of flagpole
Special Washtenaw history exhibit
"Big Party" in WCHS parking lot
Watch our newsletter for these and other celebration events.

Historical Gift Suggestions

The Washtenaw County Historical Society has a few. The throws are $50 each and are available at the Museum on Main Street and from other historical society groups in Washtenaw County.

These throws are woven in North Carolina of 100% cotton and are 60 inches by 50 inches. There are 19 images of buildings of groups that are members of the Washtenaw County Consortium. Mailing by US Priority Mail is available for $8.00 each. For additional information: www.washtenawhistory.org and click on GiftShop or call 734 / 662-9092.



Our Museum Shop has many interesting items available for purchase:

Post cards — Tiny hand-made bells
Note cards — Ornaments

A variety of books, some of which are:

ANN ARBOR IN THE 19TH CENTURY. by Grace Shackman A pictorial history of Ann Arbor. 128 pp. $20

ANN ARBOR IN THE 20TH CENTURY. by Grace Shackman A pictorial history of Ann Arbor. 128 pp. $20

ANN ARBOR OBSERVED. by Grace Shackman. Compilation of *Observer* articles. 271 pp. $20

JEWISH ANN ARBOR. by Richard Adler & Ruth Adler. 128 pp. $20

BIRDSEYE MAP OF ANN ARBOR, MI-1880. 24 by 30 in. Rolled & in tube. $10

HISTORIC BUILDINGS: *Ann Arbor, MI.* by Marjorie Reade & Susan Wineberg. 232 pp. $15

LOST ANN ARBOR: by Susan Wineberg. Buildings that have been demolished. 128 pp. $20

SALINE: *A Pictorial history.* by Susan Kosky. 128 pp $20

THE INDIANS OF WASHTENAW COUNTY, MI. 1927 by W. B. Hinsdale. 68 pp. $7

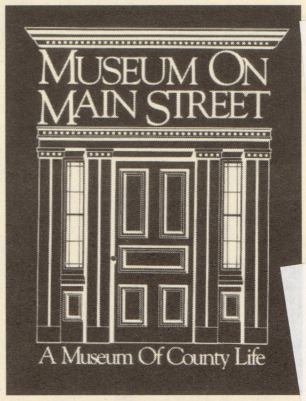
YPSILANTI IN THE 20TH CENTURY. by James Thomas Mann. 128 pp. $20

YPSILANTI, A HISTORY IN PICTURES. by James Thomas Mann. 128 pp. $20

THE ANN ARBOR RAILROAD. by D.C. Jesse Burkhardt. 128 pp. $20

ARGOMANIA – A LOOK AT ARGUS CAMERAS AND THE COMPANY THAT MADE THEM. by Henry J. Gambino. 222 pp. $40

THE WINDOWS OF ST. ANDREWS. By H. M. Hildebrandt. 48 pp. $25



WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Post Office Box 3336
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-3336

Visit the WCHS website
www.washtenawhistory.org
Check out three new local books
Turn to page 6

Come see the new exhibition
One-Room Schoolhouses of Washtenaw County
February 10 – May 30, 2007

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Ann Arbor, MI
Permit No. 96

SUNDAY • 2 PM
FEBRUARY 18, 2007
"ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES"
SPEAKER • LINDA CHAPMAN
COBBLESTONE FARM BARN
2781 PACKARD ROAD
ANN ARBOR
INFORMATION • 734.662.9092

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MEMBER 2006
NANCY KROHN
905 ROBIN RD
ANN ARBOR MI 48103-3008

Join Us at Our Sunday Programs

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
General Meetings: September 2006 - May 2007

Sunday, 2/18/07	**ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES**
	Speaker • Linda Chapman
2:00 PM	Cobblestone Farm Barn, 2871 Packard
Sunday, 3/18/07	**CARNEGIE LIBRARY PROJECTS**
	Speaker • Connie Olson
2:00 PM	Ann Arbor District Library, 350 S. Fifth Av
Sunday, 4/15/07	**DIXBORO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
	Speaker • Ilene Tyler
2:00 PM	Dixboro United Methodist Church, near Plymouth Rd & Cherry Hill Rd, Ann Arbor
May 2007	**ANNUAL WCHS MEETING**
TBA	Potluck supper • Election of officers

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Washtenaw County Historical Society is to foster interest in and to elucidate the history of Washtenaw County from the time of the original inhabitants to the present. Its mission shall be to carry out the mandate as stated through the preservation and presentation of artifacts and information by exhibit, assembly, and publication. And to teach, especially our youth, the facts, value and the uses of Washtenaw County history through exhibits in museums and classrooms, classes, tours to historical places, and other educational activities.